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is thoroughly covered. Very soon the image begins to appear. The plate must not be touched during the development. Let it remain in the dish until the details are all visible. But, as in this case, there are three exposures on one plate, when any division reveals all its details, take the plate out; for we know at once that the time of exposure given to that division was the correct time, the others being either exposed too short or too long a time. Now, take out the plate, and wash it thoroughly under the running water. The plate is now ready for the "fixer."

In the second tray is a solution of hyposulphate of soda, in the proportion of one part of soda to five parts of water; or, a more simple formula is a tablespoonful of hyposulphate of soda in five ounces of warm water. Into this solution the glass is now slipped, and must be completely covered by it. Presently the picture begins to disappear. In time the white film that we have seen covering the glass has entirely vanished. Now remove the glass from the bath and rinse it again in the running water; too much care cannot be taken to do this thoroughly. On holding the glass up to the light the gelatine coating will be seen to have entirely disappeared, but in its place the glass holds a transparent picture. This is the negative which is now set on end to dry. In immediate purpose nothing further need be done with it, since by the development we have discovered whether five, ten or fifteen seconds was the best exposure, and we register in our minds the time of day, and condition of the light for future reference. M. G. H.

(To be continued.)

SCENE-PAINTING FOR AMATEURS.

I. THE PAINT-ROOM.

IN view of the fact that the painting of scenery is not the cleanliest of artistic operations, I would recommend the amateur practitioner to select as a studio or paint-room a bare apartment in which the spattering of color will not do any harm. Next to the room, your own person is to be considered. Do not undertake to paint scenery with your good clothes on. An old suit, or an outfit of overalls and "jumper," is the appropriate costume for the scenic artist, amateur or professional. Your head should also be covered, as paint has an irresistible tendency to shower on the hair, and the glue used as a medium inevitably clots and tangles it.

The working room should be lofty and extensive enough to permit the canvas to be stretched flat over one wall. Scenes are often stretched upon a floor and painted there; but the continuous stooping required is very trying, even for a professional scene-painter, and would prove a torment and a discouragement to the amateur. Besides, it requires a skilled eye to detect inaccuracies of form and color on a scene which must be looked down upon and viewed in perspective; while with it facing you on the wall it is, like a large picture, ready for criticism, and with its defects and merits plain before you.

A platform for reaching the upper portions of the scene can readily be improvised out of a couple of step-ladders and a plank. See to it that your step-ladders are steady on their legs. The plank should be provided with a couple of upright posts at either end, between which a rope should be stretched to form a hand-grasp at your back. To anyone unaccustomed to balancing on such a perch the operation of preserving the equilibrium might seriously interfere with his painting.

Better than this would be a platform built on a pair of the trestles or "flying horses" used by builders, plasterers and house painters. They can usually be hired; but, if they are not to be found, any carpenter can make them at a small expense, and will instruct you in their use. A two-inch plank between these trestles forms a good platform, and another plank around or two above it gives a rest for the palette and a shelf for pots and brushes, as well as a support against which you can balance.

If you must paint on the floor, stretch and tack your canvas down securely, the tacks being not more than six inches apart, having first swept the space beneath it thoroughly. Provide some blocks of wood and planks, so as to make a bridge on which you can walk over the scene without treading on it, and which you can move as you require. Tie your brushes firmly to long handles, so as to avoid stooping more than is absolutely necessary, and have some boxes made with long handles to carry your paint-pots in. Your straight edges * should

also have handles permitting you to use them without incurring curvature of the spine. By observing these precautions you will be able to use the floor for an easel after a fashion.

Running water, or at any rate an abundant supply, should be at hand in every paint-room. There should be plenty of light, which, if possible, should come from the side of the scene and not from the front. In the latter case the shadow on the canvas of the person at work would be less likely to annoy and confuse him.

II. THE TOOLS.

Passing over the preparation of the canvas, which is an extremely important operation, and demands a chapter to itself, let me give a list of the working tools and materials required. I keep this list quite simple, in order not to overload the novice with encumbrances at the start.

Two important factors in the scenic art are the glue which makes the medium to hold the colors together, and the whiting, the use of which will be duly explained. For the former you need a good-sized glue-pot, of the sort carpenters and cabinet-makers use, and a roomy pail to mingle the glue and water in for the production of size. If there is a stove handy, it will be found convenient for heating the glue. If there is none, a stand with a spirit or oil-lamp under it will answer the purpose. Buy glue of good quality. Common glue dirties the colors and impairs their brilliancy.

A shallow tub is the best receptacle to store your whiting in. The necessity of this material in priming as well as painting, renders it needful to keep a goodly supply on hand. It does not matter, particularly, what kind of vessel you keep it in, however, so long as it will hold water. An old wash-tub, or a section of a liquor barrel, will do very well.

Four dozen earthenware pots, varying in capacity from a pint to a gallon, will be needed for storing and mixing the paint. Any pots that you can readily handle will do.

A slab and muller for grinding colors, or a patent color mill should also be among the implements of the paint-room. The color mill is the more handy and the less costly. Add to this a large palette knife with a broad and pliable blade, a good-sized sponge, a plumb line, such as the builders use, to govern the vertical lines in your designs, some chalk and chalk lines of the carpenter-shop variety, and some common soft charcoal, such as is used for burning. A good supply of fine French drawing charcoal must also be laid in; and of brushes you will require an assortment varying from a couple of large flat ones, for priming (like those used in whitewashing, but with handles) some large round or pound brushes for laying in masses of color, and a dozen or so of sash tools for smaller work, down to some camel's-hair brushes for striping or fine lining. A four-inch flat camel's-hair brush is also useful. Except the few needed for the finest work, the brushes must be all hog tools, and should be well made, firm and springy. There is no economy in buying cheap brushes, for they soon go to pieces.

One or two pounce bags will be needed for transferring designs. They can be made in the following manner: Take a piece of very open canvas, about eight inches square, an old stocking, or anything else through which the pounce powder can sift, and in the middle of it put your pulverized charcoal or crayon, powdered as finely as possible. This, by the way, is what is known in the paint-room as pounce powder. By drawing up the four corners and tying the powder into a hard ball with twine twisted around the waste cloth, you form a round pad, the utility of which you will learn later.

The flogger is used for clearing away the charcoal from the canvas when the drawing is complete. To make one, nail a dozen two-foot long narrow strips of calico around the end of a section of broomstick of the same length and use it like a duster. Your straight edges or rulers should be made of thin, well-seasoned white pine, with a bevel on each edge. You will need three or four, one being exactly two yards long and four inches wide, and marked off in feet to serve as a measure. Another should be thin and pliable enough to admit of being bent when you wish to draw curves and angles. The others may be of any size you choose. Common straight edges are mere strips of wood which the painter grasps by a peculiar grip in the middle, but I would advise you to have yours made with a handle in the centre of their length. It makes their use much easier. The method of using the straight edge had perhaps better be explained here once for all. Grasp the handle with

the left hand and press the lower edge of the straight edge against the canvas, slanting the ruler so as to keep the other edge away from it. Resting your brush against this edge, draw it along the canvas and a line is ruled without any paint dripping on or smearing the scene. You had better practice ruling lines with the straight edge a little before you attempt it on the canvas. It is easily acquired, but rather unhandy for a novice.

Last, but not least among your tools, comes the palette. You should have two of them: one three feet by one and a half, and another four by two, with a rim at the back and ends to keep the color from running off. They may be made with a separate division for each color, and are preferable in that way, as you are saved a continual recourse to your stock pots. Any carpenter will make such palettes for you. They should be of light but sound and well-seasoned wood, and given three or four coats of white lead, being afterward rubbed down with sand-paper to make them as smooth as possible. The difference between a scenic and an ordinary artist's palette is that the latter is a handy little board while the other is like a table-top. The scale on which the scene-painter works requires his materials and tools to correspond in proportion with their productions. You will find it convenient, by the way, to have your palette provided with handles at the ends, to facilitate your moving it.

With these preparations you may be said to have been sufficiently enlightened to get ready for work. Let me repeat the advice to purchase the best materials. There is no economy in poor ones. Cheap brushes dissolve into bristles, and cheap colors show their cheapness on their faces. Bad canvas drinks paint like a sponge and renders back no effect, and poorly seasoned wood warps and splits to pieces. The little extra cost of first-class tools and pigments will come back to you manifold in the end in the superior results attained. A good artist can make some sort of a picture out of any materials, but the better his materials the more worthy of him will be his work.

JOSEPH F. CLARE.

(To be continued.)

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY EXHIBITION.

WITH little prospect this spring of an exhibition by the moribund Society of American Artists, a more than usually good display might have been looked for at the National Academy. It happens, however, the prize exhibition, under the auspices of the American Art Association—which is being arranged at the present writing—has drawn away many of the most interesting pictures. Nevertheless, we find the National Academy Exhibition decidedly above the average in general merit. There is no canvas which deserves to be awarded the popular distinction of "the picture of the season." Indeed, there is hardly the usual number of genre paintings which please most the average visitor. But in technical excellence one finds steady improvement all along the line. We do not wish to be taken too literally—for "on the line" will be found, as usual, the work of academicians who will never improve until they cease to paint.

The hand shows generally gain of skill; but in figure painting, at least, there seems to be a paralysis of the imagination. There is J. G. Brown, who holds his own in his peculiar domain of street boy life; "A Jolly Lot," showing a gang of little gamins amused by the antics of a negro boy, and the greedy urchin, entitled "The Monopolist," being perhaps as good of their kind as can be found. Frederic Dielman strays into the same field with his "Young Gamblers," which looks very like "The Mora Players" he exhibited not long ago. He prefers Italian models with their rich coloring; as did Mr. Brown, who complains that the more picturesque of them—the little street musicians—are no longer to be seen in our streets. F. D. Millet, besides an interesting portrait, sends two genres, excellent in technique, but telling no particular story. "A Window Seat" is similar in composition and treatment of the light to Abbey's water-color drawing, "The Sisters," which has been imitated with more or less skill by many of our younger artists. But Mr. Millet cannot be classed among the imitators; for, if we mistake not, he and Mr. Abbey were together at an Oxfordshire inn when the original and unwitting model, unconsciously posed in full sunlight against the quaint white-curtained window, first aroused artistic admiration. Mr. Millet's version of the incident is new in this country, but it was shown some time ago in London where it was highly commended. The artist, to our mind, is seen to better advantage

* These terms will all be found explained in their proper place.